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War in the Middle East

The Socialist View

Dave Frankel, Dick Roberts, and Tony Thomas





Dick Roberts

Photo by Dave Warren



Tony Thomas



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Photo by John Gray

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Introduction

The socialist newsweekly *The Militant* has been one of the few publications in the United States to consistently defend the point of view of the Arab peoples in their struggle against the U.S.-supported state of Israel. The selection that follows, edited by Dave Frankel, includes articles that appeared in the October 19 and 26 and the November 2 and 9, 1973, issues of *The Militant*. In addition to explaining the issues at stake in the Mideast war, these articles help to counter the anti-Arab campaign being waged in the U.S. news media. They are reprinted by permission of *The Militant*.

Dave Frankel, a staff writer for *The Militant*, has given lectures on the Mideast at over forty universities. Dick Roberts, the author of *Mideast Oil and U.S. Imperialism*, is currently at work on a book entitled *The Economics of U.S. Imperialism*. Tony Thomas is a contributor to *Black Scholar* and author of *In Defense of Black Nationalism*.

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Roots of the Mideast Conflict

by Tony Thomas

A New York radio station carried this dispatch: "A young Egyptian housewife, left at home while her husband served at the front, said that she doesn't like war, but 'when a killer is in your house, you have a right to defend yourself.'"

This Egyptian's statement sums up the basic issue in the current Arab-Israeli war: the right of the Arab peoples to return to the land that has been stolen from them by the Zionists. This land includes the territory occupied by Israel in its 1967 expansionist war against the Arab states, as well as Palestine itself, whose inhabitants were driven from their homeland with the establishment of Israel in 1948.

The U. S. government, which has militarily, economically, and politically backed Israel since the beginning, must be held responsible for this denial of the right of self-determination to the Palestinian people. Without the backing of U. S. imperialism, the Zionist settler-state could not exist.

Washington has armed Israel to the teeth. The cornerstone of U. S. policy in the Mideast is to maintain Israel as the dominant military power in the region, and to use Israel as a foothold for imperialism against the Arab peoples.

During the current fighting, Nixon would prefer to avoid direct U. S. military intervention, which could have explosive repercussions inside the United States and around the world. But if Israel suffers major reversals in the struggle, Washington is fully prepared to intervene directly—just as it did in Vietnam.

To demonstrate this determination, the U. S. Sixth Fleet has already moved to waters off Crete, only several hundred miles from the war zone. And the helicopter carrier *Guadalcanal*, with thousands of marines, has been moved into the eastern Mediterranean.

The Pentagon has refused comment on possible U. S. intervention, while reaffirming the U. S. "commitment to Israel."

It is against Israeli aggression and its imperialist backers that the current Arab war is directed. All who support the struggle for self-determination, democracy, and peace in the

From *The Militant*, October 19, 1973

Middle East should be on the side of the Arab states in this war.

'First shot'

The Israeli government has claimed that Egypt and Syria fired the first shots in this war and are therefore the aggressors. But the question of which side moved first on the military front is irrelevant in determining where responsibility for the war lies. The very existence of the Israeli state is based on *permanent aggression* against the Palestinian and other Arab peoples, and has been since 1948.

There is ample evidence that the Israelis have long desired a new war as an excuse to further their expansionist designs against the Arab states.

The October 9, 1973, *New York Post* reported that months ago Israeli military experts had told its correspondents that "the Israeli military was hoping for a 'full-scale invasion' to give them the reason to cross Suez" and "destroy the Egyptian Army."

Moreover, statements by Israeli leaders since the beginning of the current conflict make clear that their aim in the war is not only to hold on to the territories occupied in 1967, but to grab even more territory.

Major General Aharon Yariv, special adviser to the Israeli chief of staff, declared October 9 that Israeli troops would take whatever they can get away with: "I would emphasize to the enemy that violation of the cease-fire lines [from the 1967 war] is not a one-sided game."

The October 9 *Washington Post* reports that Lieutenant General David Elazar "made it amply clear that Israel would not respect the cease-fire lines in its pursuit of the enemy."

'Going home'

The Israelis have had the nerve to claim that the Arabs have "invaded" Israeli territory. This "invasion" consists of Egyptian troops entering the Sinai Peninsula—internationally recognized *as part of Egypt*—and Syrian troops moving into the Golan Heights—internationally recognized *as part of Syria*!

"The many battle communiques," noted the October 8 *Wall Street Journal*, "may have obscured that fact to outsiders—that the war isn't being fought in Israel itself but on occupied Arab territories. The attack by the Arabs Saturday is viewed

by them not as an assault on a foreign land but as an attempt to return to lost lands." The *Wall Street Journal* doesn't mention that "Israel itself" is also "occupied Arab territory" seized in the same way as the Sinai and the Golan Heights.

French Foreign Minister Michel Jobert was reported to have commented on the Israeli charge of Arab aggression by asking, "Is it necessarily unforeseen aggression to try to go home?"

The October 9 *New York Times* reported that Ashraf Ghorbal, a close adviser of Egyptian President Anwar el-Sadat told a Cairo television show that "all Egypt wanted was recovery of occupied territory in the Sinai Peninsula and recognition of the basic rights of the Palestinians."

Ihsan Abdel Kuddus, an Egyptian journalist close to Sadat, reported the *Times*, "said that Egypt was not interested in any cease-fire resolution adopted by the United Nations Security Council but would go on fighting as long as the reason for it—the Israeli occupation of Egyptian territory—continued."

The partition of Palestine

The origins of the current war go back to the establishment of Israel, with the backing of imperialism, in 1948. The Zionist state was created by a United Nations "partition" of Palestine. The land was divided between its Arab majority and the minority of Zionist settlers, with the latter receiving the choicest parts of the country. This partition was carried out over the opposition of the overwhelming majority of Palestinians.

At the time of the partition, the Israelis launched a war and seized the remainder of the Palestinian-held territory, except for the Gaza area on the Mediterranean (which was administered by Egypt) and the West Bank of the Jordan River (which was taken by Jordan).

During and after the 1948 war, the Israelis attempted to drive Palestinians out of Israel. Massacres and bombings were carried out against unarmed and defenseless Arab villages. Arab refugees, who fled to avoid the battle zones, were not allowed to return to their homes. Property and land of the refugees were seized by the Israeli government.

Law of return

While the Zionist "law of return" opened Palestine to massive colonization by Jews from around the world, Zionist laws forbid Palestinians who fled to other Arab countries to return

to the land where they were born. Those Palestinians who remain within Israel are treated as second-class citizens under repressive laws that restrict their political rights and control where they can live and work.

In short, Israel is a settler-state built on a foundation of oppression and discrimination of the Arab peoples. In that regard it is similar to the South African or Rhodesian settler-states.

Israeli domination of Palestine is based on the fact that Israel, thanks to aid from the U. S. and other imperialist powers, is an advanced industrial nation with an imperialist economy.

The Arab states remain oppressed and semicolonial countries, and the goal of unifying the Arab peoples is still to be reached. Despite limited anti-imperialist measures taken in countries such as Egypt, Libya, Iraq, and Syria, U. S. and European imperialism dominates the economic life of these countries, thwarting their development.

The Arab states, like the other capitalist countries of Africa, Asia, and Latin America, remain underdeveloped countries. Israel, as a military and economic bastion of world imperialism in the Mideast, stands as a major obstacle in the path of economic and social progress for the Arab peoples.

Economic exploitation

The *New York Times* of September 4 printed an interview with Aharon Dovrat, a leading Israeli economist and businessman, who explained some of the economic factors involved in the 1967 war and the repression of the Arabs in the occupied territories.

Before the 1967 war, Dovrat said, Israel "was suffering a genuine depression." Now, he noted, the Zionists have "a million new consumers in the occupied territories and a new source of labor." Scores of fortunes were made out of war-inspired projects, exploitation of Arab workers in the seized lands, and captured Egyptian oil and other Arab resources.

Campaign of aggression since '67

Since the 1967 war, the Israelis have continued their military terrorism against the Arab states. Between 1967 and 1970, Israel launched scores of naval, air, artillery, and commando attacks on Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, and Egypt. These attacks

included major bombing of Cairo and Egyptian population centers and several "retaliation" raids in Jordan in which entire villages were destroyed.

In 1970, when Jordan's King Hussein massacred tens of thousands of Palestinian and other opponents of his regime, he received complete support from Israel and the U. S., both of which made preparations to intervene if the Jordanian regime was endangered by the popular revolt.

In 1972 and 1973, Israeli terrorism increased, centering on Syria and Lebanon, where the Palestinian resistance movement was strongest. Supposedly in retaliation for the death of eleven Israeli athletes at the Munich Olympics, Israel launched bombings and shellings that killed hundreds of Arab villagers. Several commando raids, air attacks, and a full-scale invasion have been launched this year against Lebanon, because that country grants asylum to Palestinian militants.

This record makes it clear that Israel's permanent mission in the Middle East is to maintain the suppression of the Arab national liberation struggle through military aggression and terrorism.

With astonishing logic, Israel has always claimed that these aggressive acts were "defensive." However, statements by Israeli military experts attempting to explain defeats in the current war expose these claims as lies.

The October 9 *New York Times* reported from Tel Aviv on the "somber" mood of Israel's military officers. Among the reasons for this mood, the *Times* said, "*was that for the first time in Israel's 25-year history the Israeli forces were not able to attack first.*" To them, "*It seemed unnatural and strange to be on the defensive.*" (Emphasis added.)

U. S. responsibility

The U. S. shares the aims of the Israelis in keeping the Arab peoples demoralized and blocking the Arab national liberation struggle. U. S. control over the bulk of the Arab world's oil depends on these results of Israel's aggressive policy. U. S. military aid has been refused to all the Arab states, except for Jordan and Saudi Arabia, which have used their military power not against Israel but against the Arab masses.

Of all the countries in the world, Israel has the largest percentage of its budget devoted to military expenditures, the highest per capita military expenditure, and the biggest ratio

of regular armed forces to population. U.S. economic and military aid makes this possible.

The U.S. gave \$300-million in arms aid in 1967 alone, and in one of several arms deals in 1970 the U.S. gave Israel \$500-million in military equipment. In times of Israeli military action, such as during the current war and in 1967, U.S. armed forces have stood by to intervene if needed to protect the Zionist state.

According to the October 10 *New York Times*, the Pentagon "declined to discuss whether the United States was considering a sale" of additional warplanes to Israel. "Administration officials sought to discourage rumors that Israel had already asked about immediate purchase."

The danger of U.S. intervention in the war is very real. The imperialist rulers of this country will not hesitate to risk a world nuclear holocaust to protect their interests. The savage inhumanity of the U.S. warmakers was demonstrated for all to see in the horror inflicted on Vietnam. They are quite capable of doing the same thing—or worse—in the Mideast.

The only road to peace in the Mideast is to end the Zionist occupation of Arab territories and to grant the demands of the Palestinian people to return to their homeland, with equal social, political, and religious rights with the Jewish population.

Why the Arab Peoples Fight Israel

by Dave Frankel

Supporters of Israel claim it is committed to peace and democracy. They portray the Arab peoples struggling against the Zionist state as anti-Jewish fanatics motivated by hatred and racism.

Just over a year ago the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith declared, "Arab extremists do not seek merely to eradicate Israel; they want to destroy world Jewry which stands behind Israel. It will be tragic if Jews—and the rest of the world—are led to believe that Arab extremists are a tiny minority in the Arab world and that they do not reflect the real feeling of the Arab masses."

But an examination of the actual history of the Middle East shows that the opposition of the Arab masses to Zionism has nothing to do with irrational hatred. It grew out of the struggle

From *The Militant*, October 26, 1973

of the Arab peoples against colonial domination and for control of their own land.

The aim of the Zionists was to set up a Jewish state in Palestine. In pursuit of this aim they coined the slogan, "A land without people for a people without land."

But the land of Palestine did have a people living there. In 1917, when the British Lord Balfour announced, "His Majesty's Government view with favor the establishment in Palestine of a National home for the Jewish people," only 11 percent of the population of Palestine was Jewish.

Having promised to one people the land of another, Balfour explained in a memorandum to the British government, "In Palestine we do not propose even to go through the form of consulting the wishes of the present inhabitants of the country."

The British saw the Zionist community as a bulwark against Arab nationalist aspirations. The Zionist settlers were bound to support British rule, since the establishment and maintenance of the Zionist state could only be achieved with the backing of imperialism.

Sir Ronald Storrs, the first civil governor of Jerusalem under the British wrote in his memoirs: "Enough [Jews] could return, if not to form a Jewish state... at least to prove that the enterprise was one which blessed him that gave as well as him that took, by forming for England 'a little loyal Jewish Ulster' in a sea of potentially hostile Arabism."

As late as the nineteenth Zionist congress in 1935, David Ben-Gurion, later the prime minister of Israel, declared, "Whoever betrays Great Britain betrays Zionism." Today Israel plays the same role in relation to the U.S.

Throughout the 1930s, Jews fleeing the terror of Nazism in Europe were forced to come to Palestine because of the refusal of the U.S. and Britain to allow them entry. This continued after World War II as well.

The hundreds of thousands of new immigrants were organized by the Zionist movement to confront the Palestinians as enemies. Boycotts of Arab labor and agricultural products were organized to build up a separate Jewish economy. Arab workers were barred from the Jewish trade-union federation, and when the Palestinian people rose up against British colonial rule in 1936-39, the Zionists sided with the British.

In November 1947 the United Nations voted to partition Palestine into two states. This was a violation of the right

of the Palestinian people to determine their own future. At that time there were 1,280,000 Arabs in Palestine out of a total population of 1,874,000.

The Palestinians demanded a single, independent Palestine, in which both Arabs and Jews could live. What prevented this was not the "hatred and irrationality" of the Palestinians, but the determination of the Zionists to carve an exclusive Jewish state out of an Arab country.

Moshe Dayan explained this very well in the September 30, 1968, *Jerusalem Post*. "Every solution—including the establishment of a bi-national state—faced the alternative of either making allowances for the views and desires of the Arabs and putting an end to Zionism," Dayan said, "or carrying on with immigration, land purchase and settlement while denying the right of the Arabs of Palestine to determine the future of the country."

The Israeli state was founded on the expulsion of the majority of the Palestinians and on the suppression of those who remained. The maintenance of the Israeli state requires the maintenance of this injustice, and this is the root of the ongoing conflict between Palestinians and Israelis.

Expulsion of the Palestinians

Although apologists for the Israeli state often claim that the Palestinians became a nation of exiles voluntarily, the truth is well documented by the Israelis themselves. Menachem Begin, who was the leader during the 1948 war of the right-wing terrorist organization, the Irgun, and who was taken into the Israeli cabinet in 1967, wrote in his book, *The Revolt, Story of the Irgun*:

"The legend of Deir Yassin [a village where the Irgun carried out a massacre of some 250 Arab men, women, and children] helped us in particular in the saving of Tiberias and the conquest of Haifa. . . Arabs throughout the country . . . were seized with limitless panic and started to flee for their lives. This mass flight soon developed into a maddened uncontrollable stampede."

Yigal Allon, who was commander of the Palmach (an elite commando unit) in 1948, wrote in *The Book of the Palmach* of the tactics he used before May 15, 1948, and the declaration of the state of Israel to "clean the inner Galilee" of Arabs.

"I gathered all the Jewish mukhtars, who have contact with Arabs in different villages, and asked them to whisper in the

ears of some Arabs that a great Jewish reinforcement had arrived in Galilee and that it is going to burn all the villages of Huleh. They should suggest to the Arabs, as their friends, to escape while there was still time. . . The tactic reached its goal completely. . . The wide areas were cleaned. . ."

The expulsion of the Palestinians is not merely a historical tragedy, something unrelated to the current conflict. At the time of the 1967 war the *New York Times* reported: "There seems to be little doubt that the 60,000 inhabitants of the three big United Nations camps around Jericho were attacked by planes on the second day of the fighting. . . Senior UN officials believe that a pattern of expulsion is emerging. They say the Israelis appear to be concentrating on pushing out inhabitants of such frontier villages as Qalqilya and Tulkarm as well as the inhabitants of the big refugee camps . . . Israeli loudspeakers warned the inhabitants, 'You have two hours to leave. After that we cannot guarantee your safety.'"

According to a report in the June 29, 1967, *New York Times*, much of Qalqilya was destroyed after the fighting was over. The nature of the Israeli settler-state ensures that such atrocities will continue as long as Israel exists.

A new holocaust?

Along with the cover-up of Zionist crimes by backers of Israel goes the argument that Israel is needed to protect the Jewish people from extermination. In the Middle East, however, the hostility to Jews came about *as a result of* the crimes of Zionism.

The hatred that the Arab masses feel for Zionism is a natural reaction to oppression. The suffering of the Jews in Europe is no justification for the oppression of another people.

The aspiration of the Palestinians is not to oppress the Jews, but to cast off their own oppression.

Virtually all the major Palestinian organizations have rejected the idea of expelling the Israeli Jews from Palestine. Typical is the statement of the Popular Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine that insists on "the construction of a democratic popular state in the whole of the territory of Palestine in which Arabs and Jews will enjoy equal rights and obligations, everyone being entitled to develop his national culture in a democratic, progressive spirit."

Talk about extermination of the Jews if the Palestinians were to regain their rights is on the same level as Nixon's claim in

1969 that there would be a "bloodbath" if the U. S. got out of Vietnam. Similar arguments were used against the demands of the Mau Mau freedom fighters in Kenya and the Algerian revolution.

The real danger to the Jewish people and the real source of anti-Semitism is not the struggle of the Palestinian people for their rights, but the capitalist system. Instead of recognizing this, Zionism pits the Jewish people against those who should be their natural allies. Because the Israeli state was imposed and is maintained only by force of arms, it must rely on U. S. imperialism and oppose the right of the Arab peoples to control their own resources and modernize their countries.

The only way out of this vicious cycle of continual warfare is for the Israeli Jews to reject their role as oppressors of the Palestinians and as counterrevolutionary shock troops for the U. S. They must accept the idea of giving up their special privileges won at the expense of the Palestinians, and live together with them in a single state. Finally, they must join with the Palestinians and the other Arab peoples in a common struggle for a socialist Middle East.

Washington, Moscow, and the Mideast

by Tony Thomas

Leslie Gelb, writing in the October 9, 1973, *New York Times* on the causes of the Arab-Israeli war, reported that a high U.S. official had pointed out "that the Arabs' strategy was based on the conviction that Israel would not give up an inch of the large territory occupied in the six-day war of 1967 except under severe pressure."

This official said that Egyptian President Anwar el-Sadat knew that "losses on the battlefield would be severe, but attack represented his only hope of bringing about movement on the negotiating front."

The 1967 war left Egypt's Sinai Peninsula, Syria's Golan Heights, the Jordanian-held West Bank of the Jordan River, and the Egyptian-administered Gaza area in Israeli hands. Since that time, the rulers of Egypt, Syria, and Jordan have been under pressure from the Arab masses to regain those lost territories.

Instead of mobilizing this sentiment against Israel in a revolution

From *The Militant*, October 26, 1973

lutionary struggle, the Arab rulers sought to regain the occupied territories through diplomacy and by making concessions. They feared that a mobilization of the Arab peoples to win victories against Israel and its imperialist backers could lead to a social revolution against the rulers of the Arab world as well.

Following this course, the Arab heads of state agreed to support the 1967 UN Security Council resolution on the Mideast. This resolution, formally backed by Washington and Moscow, provides for the return of the Arab territories occupied in the six-day war in exchange for Arab recognition of the sovereignty of Israel.

Some Arab leaders, such as Egypt's Nasser and Sadat, went so far as to voice support for a plan that would "guarantee" Israeli borders by placing U.S., British, French, and other troops on Israel's borders to protect its "sovereignty."

These concessions offered to Israel represented a retreat for the Arab struggle. Previously, the Arab states had refused to recognize Israel because of mass support to the right of the Palestinian people to regain their homeland. However, acceptance of the UN resolution showed that the Arab rulers were willing to sell out the Palestinian struggle in exchange for a U.S.-Soviet endorsed deal with Israel.

Early in 1971, Egyptian leaders warned Palestinian resistance groups that opposition to the deal "won't be allowed." Egypt, Syria, Iraq, and the other supposed "progressive" and pro-Palestinian Arab states refused to lift a finger while Jordan, Lebanon, and Israel carried out military campaigns against the Palestinians. Tens of thousands of Palestinians were killed, and the resistance organizations were greatly weakened.

All this was seen as a concession to Washington and Tel Aviv and a move toward a settlement.

In 1972 and early 1973 massive demonstrations involving Egyptian students and workers took place in Cairo and Helwan. These actions demanded nationalization of the holdings of U.S. imperialism, arming the Egyptian masses to fight Israel, ending the policies of negotiating through the U.S. and the UN, and seizing the wealth of war speculators and Egyptian capitalists to finance the struggle against Zionist aggression.

The Sadat regime responded by attacking these demonstrators with the army and police. Sadat announced he would pursue his plan to obtain a settlement under the auspices of Washington and Moscow.

The U.S. and Israel

Many of the moves of the Arab rulers were based on the illusion that the U.S. would force Israel to make concessions.

The idea that Arab concessions would result in the U.S. making Israel back down has been disproven in the six years since the 1967 war. Israel, as a colonialist enterprise, depends on continued expansion against the Arab peoples. A return of major portions of the territories occupied in 1967—even in exchange for Arab recognition of Israel—would put into question Zionist control over the lands occupied in 1947, 1948, and 1949—that is, Israel itself.

U.S. imperialism has stood behind Israel since the Zionist state was established. The "survival" of Israel has been dependent on billions of dollars worth of U.S. arms, U.S. economic assistance and loans, and other support.

Israel serves the interests of the U.S. ruling class, especially the oil magnates with holdings in the Mideast, by keeping the Arab revolution weak and imperialism strong. A return of the Arab territories would be a setback to the imperialists as well as to the Zionists.

Washington may press Israel to make minor concessions for the sake of a settlement, but the Zionists have nothing to fear. The U.S. will never abandon Israel for fear of an anti-imperialist victory. Thus Washington backed Israeli aggression in 1967 and the numerous bombings, shellings, commando raids, and military invasions of Arab territories launched since that time.

While this relationship sometimes allows a division of labor in which Tel Aviv appears more "hawkish" and Washington more "dovish," it is the interests of imperialism that are at the heart of Israeli aggression and war in the Mideast.

The illusions of the Arab rulers that a pro-U.S. "tilt" could win them concessions should have been dispelled by the case-history of Jordan, the most blatantly proimperialist country bordering Israel. Jordan served as the instrument for the "liquidation" of the Palestinian resistance in 1970 and 1971. Despite U.S. backing, *Jordan is the Arab country that has the most significant portion of its pre-1967 population and territory occupied by Israel.*

Detente

The Arab states also relied on a diplomatic and military alliance with Moscow as a means of pressuring the U.S. and

Israel to return the occupied territories. But this alliance was also a pressure on the Arabs to keep their struggles within bounds acceptable to Washington—Moscow's partner in its plans for "peaceful coexistence."

As the detente was inaugurated with Nixon's visit to the Soviet Union in 1972, it became increasingly clear that Moscow was cutting down its support to the Arab states. In 1972 Soviet military experts told Syrian journalists that the Soviet Union opposed the Arab policy of "no war—no peace" until the return of the occupied territories. These experts made clear that Moscow demanded an immediate settlement—that is, on U.S.-Israeli terms.

One of the fruits of the detente was Moscow's refusal to give Egypt weapons that could be used effectively to carry the war to Israel and put more pressure on the Zionists to withdraw. In July 1972 the Sadat regime ordered the entire Soviet military assistance group—including 20,000 Soviet advisers concentrated in antiaircraft, missile, and tank units—to leave Egypt.

This step greatly weakened Egypt's capacity to defend itself from Israeli aggression. Egyptian attempts to get arms and military assistance from Western European countries in the fall of 1972 failed, and the Egyptians reestablished close relations with Moscow.

Observers in the capitalist press have reported that Sadat broke with Moscow on the advice of Saudi Arabian officials who predicted that this step would change U.S. policy, by showing that the Egyptians were willing to line up with the U.S. against the Soviet Union. However, as usual, this Arab concession led to no change in U.S. or Israeli policy.

The detente became more and more clearly an attempt to impose solutions favorable to U.S. imperialism on the peoples of the world, as was clear in Vietnam. In the Mideast, detente encouraged the Israelis to launch dozens of attacks on the Arab peoples and *not* to make any concessions in the direction of returning Arab lands. The *Washington Post* reports that just before the current war, Sadat "was convinced that both the United States and the Soviet Union preferred a continuation of Israeli occupation of Arab land to new hostilities that would threaten detente."

In this atmosphere, the Zionists launched a campaign not only to retain Arab territories but to settle and integrate them into Israel.

Eric Rouleau, writing in the October 9 issue of the Paris

daily *Le Monde*, reports that Israeli Defense Minister Moshe Dayan's policy, "referred to by his opponents as 'rampant annexationism,' was accelerating." The Golan Heights, taken from Syria in 1967, had been "practically integrated" into Israel. Urbanization was taking place at Sharm el-Sheikh at the southern tip of Sinai and in the northern part also.

Rouleau reports that the platform of Israel's ruling Labor Party in the coming elections called for "multiplying Jewish agricultural and industrial implantations throughout the occupied territories."

Arab revolt

In the current war, the Arab states are revolting against the oppressive conditions imposed upon them by the U.S.-Soviet detente. The *Christian Science Monitor* reports that Ishan Khuddus, one of Sadat's top advisers, had written just before the war that "we need to raise the level of pressure through action to end the deadlock." This same report says that Cairo "started up the war again to give the peace negotiations a chance."

The detente has prevented the Arab states from gaining the limited goals of the 1967 UN resolution—despite their demonstrated willingness to suppress the Arab revolution in exchange for these goals. Now they hope to compel U.S. imperialism and the Soviet bureaucrats to force the Israelis to grant concessions through war.

This is a demonstration that even from the point of view of the ruling classes of the Arab world, the detente and other "peaceful solutions" are only declarations of war against oppressed nations. Rather than a force for peace, the detente and "peaceful coexistence" will be used to rationalize military aggression against peoples who resist aggression and oppression, as the Arab states currently are doing.

All those with a real interest in peace should support the Arab states in their struggle against Israeli aggression.

However, to end the Zionist occupation in the Mideast and win national liberation for the Arab peoples, the Arab countries must break from the restricting policies of the current Arab rulers. The Arab capitalists must be replaced through the process of social revolution that will put power in the hands of the Arab workers and poor farmers. This would unleash the massive anti-imperialist sentiment of the Arab peoples, who would institute the type of measures demanded by the Egyptian workers and students.

Nixon's Mideast War Drive

by Dick Roberts

U. S. warships loaded with marines are headed for the Mideast. A massive shipment of U.S. military equipment to Israel is under way.

The need to mobilize international opposition to the U.S.-Israeli aggression in the Mideast is urgent.

Washington's assertion that the airlift of weapons was begun only in response to Moscow's military aid is pure cynicism and hypocrisy. Washington's supply of weapons to Israel has never ceased. Israeli Premier Golda Meir conceded in Tel Aviv on October 13, 1973, that U.S. assistance to Israel was "ongoing."

Far from merely "responding" to Soviet aid to the Arabs, the U.S. maintains Israel as a military outpost of American imperialism in the Arab lands—and supplies arms for the Zionists' permanent aggression against the Arab peoples.

Washington's Middle East policy hinges on maintaining unchallengeable Israeli military superiority. To achieve this, it has continually supplied the Israeli war machine.

The October 10 *Wall Street Journal* put it bluntly: ". it is U.S. military equipment that has helped make Israel strong. And only the U.S. can replace lost material fast enough to do Israel any good," the leading financial newspaper stated.

Nixon's ominous decision to intervene with U.S. military might heightens the ever-present danger of a nuclear holocaust that could engulf the entire world.

The likelihood that the Israeli regime possesses its own nuclear weapons—as reported by Western military analysts—underscores the danger of a third world war.

The American ruling class is virtually unanimous in its determination to punish the Arabs for fighting to regain their land. Democratic and Republican politicians throughout the country are getting up one after the other to call for stepped-up U.S. military support for Israel.

New York Congressman Bertram Podell spelled out the aspirations of the imperialists when he declared in the House of Representatives October 15, "The Israelis will need more guns, tanks, missiles, and planes, not just to win the war,

From *The Militant*, October 26, 1973

but to make sure that the Arab States will think long and hard before attacking again."

Vast quantities of "guns, tanks, missiles, and planes" are already en route to Israel. An Associated Press dispatch from the Azores, site of the giant U.S. Air Force base in the Mid-Atlantic, reported an airlift of cargo and warplanes at fifteen-minute intervals. The planes included Galaxies, Boeing 707s, C-130 and C-141 cargo planes, and F-4 Phantom fighter-bombers.

The Pentagon has ordered the attack carrier *John F. Kennedy*, which was scheduled to return to the U.S., to remain in the eastern Atlantic. There are already two attack carriers with the U.S. Sixth Fleet in the Mediterranean.

"The helicopter carrier *Iwo Jima* was loading a landing team of 2,000 marines at Morehead City, N.C., preparing to sail for the Mediterranean. Another marine landing team is already in the Mediterranean, aboard the helicopter carrier, *Guadalcanal*," the October 17 *New York Times* reported.

But the American people are far less united than the capitalist politicians in support of this new war drive by the imperialists. A Gallup poll published October 16 found that less than half of the American people supported Israel, in spite of the anti-Arab propaganda barrage. The majority had either "no opinion," (25 percent), favored neither side (22 percent), or favored the Arab states (6 percent).

"The dominant mood of the public is clearly that the United States should not get involved in the struggle in terms of sending American forces," Gallup declared.

Among the shrillest voices in the U. S. Congress in favor of sending increased U. S. arms into the war are former Vietnam "doves." Typical was Democratic Congressman Herman Badillo. Badillo declared on October 9 that "it becomes clearer by the hour that the Holy Day attack on Israel by the armed forces of Egypt and Syria was totally without provocation.

"I have today joined . . . in sponsoring a resolution calling upon the administration to honor immediately existing commitments to supply aircraft to Israel."

The fact is there was no "attack on Israel" as Badillo and others on Capitol Hill claim. The territory in dispute was violently seized from Arab governments in 1967, by Israel's unprovoked six-day blitzkrieg. This is not to speak of the

whole history of Israel's bloody seizure of Palestinian land to establish the Zionist state to begin with.

Washington initially held back in hopes that the Israeli regime would repeat its crippling attack on the Arab armies of 1967. This expectation was widely shared in the capitalist world.

From the imperialists' standpoint, a repeat of the 1967 Arab defeat would make the oil-rich Arab states more pliant. It would demoralize the Arab worker and peasant masses, give added strength to the Israeli occupations of Egyptian, Jordanian, and Syrian territory, and any new territory Israel seized from the Arabs, and it would be one more blow to the Palestinian liberation movement.

But if Egypt or Syria regain some of the land occupied in the 1967 war, it would be a blow to imperialism. It would demonstrate to the masses of the colonial and semicolonial lands that it pays to fight rather than rely on diplomatic maneuvering with Washington and Moscow. It would encourage Arab militants to go much further than the limits imposed on the war by Egyptian President Sadat and the other misleaders of the bourgeois Arab regimes.

Even a partial Arab victory would encourage the Arab masses to demand the full liberation of Palestine and the overthrow of the Zionist state.

Christian Science Monitor reporter David Winder noted October 13, "There are other nagging worries [to the imperialists—D. R.].

"The war is not only radicalizing the entire Arab region but rallying support for the Arabs in the wider Muslim world as well. This could pose foreign-policy problems for the United States in key friendly countries like Iran and Pakistan."

"There could be no question that the military balance was in danger of a destabilizing shift," the *Times* said in an October 16 editorial. This is what brought the vast armada of U. S. tanks, missiles, and bombers into the rapidly expanding war.

Arab gains

Whatever now happens, the Arabs have won a significant political victory. The imperialists' shock and surprise—a reflection of their racist denigration of the Arabs and their typically imperialist underestimation of the capacity of the oppressed masses to fight back—is itself eloquent testimony to the gains that have been made.

It is revealing to compare the first assessments of the war

with those of a few days later. Leslie Gelb (formerly a Pentagon "expert" on the war in Southeast Asia and contributor to the Pentagon papers) wrote on October 9 that Washington's "Arabists" think that Arabs "do not calculate their behavior by Western standards of success; winning is less important than recovering a sense of dignity and honor."

By October 14, *New York Times* military writer Drew Middleton was declaring, "The war has produced a succession of military surprises. The first and, in the long run, the most important, in the military view, was the demonstration by the Syrians and [!] the Arabs that they are capable of operating complex modern weapons in combat."

The reaction of a young Arab in Brooklyn, N. Y., the first night of the war—"I hope Egypt did attack first"—reflects a feeling that has swept Arab communities throughout the world and is manifested in the ranks of the armed forces in the Middle East.

Unfortunately these troops are fighting under a grave misleadership. The capitalist regimes in Cairo and Damascus are seeking a diplomatic edge through military maneuvers. Their objective is to gain concessions from Israel to appease the Arab masses.

They oppose mobilizing the masses even for these limited ends, which are being sought mainly on the battlefield. These bourgeois politicians fear the independent thrust of mass movements and look to behind-the-scenes deals with Washington and Moscow for a solution.

The only realistic long-term solution to the Middle East crisis is the overthrow of the Zionist state of Israel and the return of Palestine to the Palestinians, thus eliminating the cause of the aggression. But this course is rejected by Cairo and Damascus.

Since the Six Days' War in 1967, it is evident that more and more of the world's masses have come to understand the reactionary role played by Israel in the Middle East, and to oppose U. S. military, financial, and diplomatic support to Israel. It is this mass pressure that has turned virtually the entire Arab, African, and "neutralist" bloc in the United Nations against U. S. policy in the Mideast.

There has been a shift in thinking among significant sectors of the U. S. population as well. Millions of Black people, for example, identify with the Arab peoples as victims of oppression at the hands of the same forces that oppress them—the U. S. government.

Many young people throughout the U. S., including—to the consternation of the U. S. rulers—many young Jews, are opposed to the Israeli state.

As the radicalization process of recent years has deepened, more and more people have learned to see through the lies spewed forth by the warmakers in Washington. Millions of people, having just gone through the experience of the U. S. military intervention in Vietnam, have no desire whatever to get dragged into yet another shooting war.

In this political atmosphere, opponents of U. S. intervention in the Mideast have a crucial role to play. It is our job to expose the lies and phony justifications being churned out by the rulers of this country, and to mobilize opposition to the war moves now under way by Washington.

Why Socialists Support the Arabs by Tony Thomas

One of the most frequent questions asked of speakers from the Socialist Workers Party is why we support the Arab side in the current war with Israel. Some questioners reason that since both Israel and the Arab states are capitalist, we should not take sides.

Others say it is contradictory for us to favor the overthrow of the capitalist Arab regimes, yet support the Arab side in a war against Israel.

These questioners confuse our stand on the Arab-Israeli war with the position revolutionary Marxists take in regard to wars between two imperialist countries. The question in imperialist wars is the division of spoils taken from the working class and colonial peoples by the different imperialist robbers. The victory of neither side advances the struggles of the working class and oppressed peoples.

However, the basic issue in the current Mideast war is the struggle of a nationally oppressed people against colonial oppressors. In that struggle socialists take the side of the oppressed despite our differences with their leadership. A victory for the Arabs in the war against Israel would be an advance not only for the struggle of the Arab peoples but in the general colonial struggle against imperialism.

The Arab states have yet to overcome the legacy of colonial domination left them first by the Ottoman Empire and then by the European and U. S. imperialists. Today, their econo-

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mies—including oil resources—remain dominated by the imperialist powers.

Israel's colonial domination of Arab lands is based on the imperialist-imposed backwardness of the Arab states, as well as the massive U. S. aid the Zionist colony has received since 1948.

Backed by this imperialist power, Israel was established in 1948 with the seizure of the Arab lands in Palestine. Seven hundred and fifty thousand Palestinians were driven from their homes. Those who remain face national oppression in their own homeland.

Israel again expanded in 1967 with the seizure of the Golan Heights, the Sinai Peninsula, the Gaza Strip, and the West Bank of the Jordan River. Half a million Arabs were driven out of their homelands in this operation.

The dynamic of the Mideast war centers on the struggle of the Arab peoples to rid themselves of the Zionist colonialists and the struggle of the colonialists to weaken the Arab peoples. In struggles against colonialism and national oppression, Marxists give unconditional support to the colonized peoples. By the word "unconditional," we mean we support the struggle against oppression regardless of our differences with the current leadership of the Arab states.

Revolutionary socialists do not think the Arab capitalist leaders have a program that can win the struggle against Zionist colonialism. In the years since 1967, these leaders have opposed the revolutionary anti-Zionist, anti-imperialist sentiments of the Arab masses. Instead of mobilizing the Arab masses against Israel, they chose to make concessions to Zionism and to Israel's imperialist backers.

They have repressed the attempts of the Arab masses to move against Israeli colonialism, such as the Palestinian resistance movement and the massive anti-Zionist, anti-Sadat actions carried out by Egyptian workers and students over the past few years. The rulers of the Arab states feared that such mobilizations could lead to the overthrow of their own corrupt regimes.

Revolutionary socialists believe that only through the process of socialist revolution can the resources of the Arab world—and the full power of the Arab workers, students, and farmers—be mobilized against colonialism. This perspective is opposed by the Arab rulers.

But in the current war with Israel, the difference Marxists have with the Arab rulers is over *how* and for what to wage

this struggle, not whether to wage it. A refusal to support the Arabs in this struggle would be a refusal to support the active fight against Israel.

To use an analogy, we support the Black struggle against white racist oppression in this country, in spite of its inadequate leadership. At different times this struggle may be led by forces that support the Republican and Democratic parties, such as the conservative, procapitalist NAACP. But it would do nothing to advance the Black struggle if revolutionists refused to support a specific struggle because it is being led by NAACPers, or by Black Republicans or Democrats. In fact, a position of unconditional support of such struggles is a key condition for revolutionary socialists to win Black activists to a revolutionary socialist perspective.

At the same time, of course, revolutionary socialists would oppose any of the limitations such procapitalist leaders might try to place on the struggle.

Similarly, revolutionary socialists support the struggle of African liberation organizations that are fighting Portuguese, Rhodesian, and South African colonialism, even if their leadership is not explicitly in favor of socialism. Would it be correct for revolutionary socialists to refuse to support Tanzania or Zambia if they took military action to aid the African liberation struggles? Of course not! Such opposition would only play into the hands of Portugal, Rhodesia, and South Africa.

To fail to be at the side of the Arab masses in the struggle against Israel because this struggle is led by the Arab capitalists would be a refusal to take sides in a concrete struggle against Zionist racism and colonialism, and would only stand in the way of the efforts of Arab revolutionary socialists to win the leadership of the Arab workers and farmers in a struggle against both the Arab regimes and Israel.

Behind Nixon's Threat of Nuclear War by Dave Frankel

Richard Nixon brought the world to the brink of nuclear war with the Soviet Union on October 25, 1973.

Missiles were raised to firing positions, special battle staffs went on duty, bomber crews slept in their planes, leaves were canceled, and the entire U. S. military machine of 2.2 million men was placed on combat alert.

From *The Militant*, November 9, 1973

In describing the situation at a televised news conference the next day, Nixon spoke of a conflict that could have led to "a nuclear confrontation." He said this was "the most difficult crisis we've had since the Cuban confrontation of 1962." That crisis saw an "eyeball to eyeball" nuclear confrontation between President John Kennedy and Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev over Cuba's right to defend itself with Soviet missiles. Robert Kennedy later admitted in his book about the crisis that his brother had been fully prepared to launch an all-out nuclear war if Khrushchev refused to remove Soviet missiles from Cuba.

In case there were any who thought that he would balk at incinerating the human race, Nixon assured his audience that his response to alleged moves by the Kremlin was "very firm and left little to the imagination of how we would react." He added that "the tougher it gets, the cooler I get."

He boasted that because "the president went ahead and did what he thought was right" by ordering the bombing and mining of North Vietnam in December 1972, "Mr. Brezhnev knew that regardless of the pressure at home, regardless of what people see and hear on television night after night, he [the president] would do what was right."

At an earlier news conference, Secretary of State Henry Kissinger set a different tone. He took pains to assure the press that the worldwide alert of U. S. military forces was only a "precautionary" measure, and that "we do not consider ourselves in a confrontation with the Soviet Union."

In contrast to Nixon, Kissinger insisted that "we are not talking of a missile-crisis type of situation." However, since Nixon was the man with his finger on the nuclear button, his assessment carries some extra weight. Moreover, Kissinger himself, while trying to downplay the imminence of a nuclear confrontation, felt it necessary to remind his audience that both the U. S. and USSR have "nuclear arsenals capable of annihilating humanity," and "have a special duty to see that confrontations are kept within bounds that do not threaten civilized life."

The first reaction of many people to the military alert was to assume that Nixon had engineered another foreign policy spectacular to divert attention from the latest Watergate scandal and the massive pressure for his impeachment.

CBS reporter Marvin Kalb asked Kissinger to comment on the possibility that the alert "might have been prompted

as much perhaps by American domestic requirements as by the real requirements of diplomacy in the Middle East."

Despite Kissinger's pained reply that "it is a symptom of what is happening to our country that it could even be suggested that the United States would alert its forces for domestic reasons," the questions persisted. Kissinger felt constrained to plead with another reporter that "there has to be a minimum of confidence that the senior officials of the American Government are not playing with the lives of the American people."

Another factor contributing to the disbelief was the illusion that the Washington-Moscow detente ruled out the possibility of a real confrontation. Nobody can deny that the widespread distrust of Nixon and cynicism about government pronouncements are well founded, and Nixon certainly tried to get all the mileage he could out of the Mideast crisis. However, nothing could be more dangerous than to discount Nixon's nuclear saber-rattling as empty rhetoric, or to mistake the detente as a defense against nuclear war.

As *The Militant* warned in our October 26 issue, "The imperialist rulers of the U. S. have proved time and time again that the maintenance of their power and privileges is more important to them than the survival of humanity." We warned, "Nixon's ominous decision to intervene with U. S. military might heightens the ever-present danger of a nuclear holocaust that could engulf the entire world."

Ample evidence that the Middle East showdown was real is provided by the reactions of sections of the capitalist class unfriendly to Nixon. Senator Kennedy declared, "President Nixon acted decisively, and I support his action."

The *New York Times* said October 26 that "it was evident that both [the U. S. and the Soviet Union] were approaching a point of possible no return." And on October 28 it held that Nixon's statement that the crisis was "the most difficult since the Cuban confrontation of 1962" was not "an unjust appraisal."

Finally, on October 29, the *Times* gave its seal of approval to Nixon's threat to use the H-bomb. "The worldwide military alert ordered early Thursday morning by President Nixon," it said, "may indeed have been the correct and prudent response to an external threat to vital American interests."

The October 25 confrontation was precipitated by the encirclement of the Egyptian III Corps—estimated to number about 20,000 troops and 200 tanks—by Israeli troops follow-

ing a cease-fire agreement. The Israeli government had declared its intention of inflicting the heaviest possible casualties on the Arab armies at the beginning of the latest war. It made no secret of its distaste for the cease-fire agreement concluded by Washington and Moscow and passed by the UN Security Council October 22.

"We had no real choice," said one Israeli official. "Here was a personal appeal from the president of the United States at a time when Israel was more dependent than ever on the United States. We were hardly in a position to say no."

Although the Israelis accepted the cease-fire verbally, they continued to pump troops and supplies into their bridgehead on the west bank of the Suez Canal. *Newsweek* reported, "In the day following the scheduled start of the cease-fire, it became apparent that 'very major' Israeli violations were taking place as Israeli troops proceeded to cut off the Egyptian Third Army."

Kissinger explained more delicately that "there was a breakdown of the cease-fire which led to certain Israeli territorial gains."

Whether the Israeli offensive was planned with Nixon's and Kissinger's agreement, or was carried out and later won their acceptance, may never be known. But when the Security Council reaffirmed the original cease-fire resolution on October 23, the Egyptian III Corps was in an untenable position.

With the Israeli army intent on destroying the Egyptian force, President Sadat of Egypt called for an emergency meeting of the Security Council, demanded that the original cease-fire lines be restored, and asked Moscow and Washington to send troops to police the agreement.

In the meantime, according to Nixon, the Kremlin began preparing to send troops into Egypt. The shroud of secrecy that veils U.S.-Soviet diplomacy keeps us from knowing exactly what Brezhnev intended to do. But there can be no doubt that he said enough to convince Nixon that he wasn't about to tolerate the destruction of III Corps.

Bernard Nossiter wrote in the October 28 *Washington Post* that "it is reasonable to think that Moscow was furious over what it regarded as Israeli cheating on the deal with Washington." Nixon, however, chose to jump in behind Israel with the threat of the H-bomb. Apparently the Kremlin backed down, and another agreement was reached before the confrontation went any further.

"In the Israeli view," Nossiter wrote, "the U. S. alert of Thurs-

day was a notable piece of crisis management and did not reflect either irrational behavior by President Nixon or a political device to escape his domestic difficulties."

The Security Council passed a new cease-fire resolution October 25, this one with provisions for a UN force to oversee the cease-fire. The Egyptian III Corps remained surrounded, but in no immediate danger of being forced to surrender, since the Israelis were permitting food and water to be supplied to it.

Israeli Chief of Staff David Elazar explained the decision to allow provisions to reach the III Corps: "We were compelled to agree. It was imposed on us to arrange the convoy." The Israeli government stated that it had approved the resupply "in response to the urgent and special appeal of the United States Government."

Role of detente

When Soviet Communist Party boss Leonid Brezhnev visited the U. S. last June, he characterized the Middle East as one of the "hotbeds of dangerous tension in the world." He called Nixon a man of peace, and held out the hope that the detente could secure "a truly lasting peace on earth for many generations."

At that time *The Militant* warned that "Brezhnev's summit policies of capitulating to Nixon and prettifying the imperialist warmakers will not lessen the danger of nuclear war; rather these policies will embolden Nixon and strengthen his hand.

"The only answer to the danger of nuclear conflagration and to the other problems of humanity is resolute struggle to resist the injustices of the capitalist rulers and ultimately to take the power out of their hands through a socialist revolution."

The truth of this analysis has been proved once again by the events of the past week. Brezhnev has been pleading all along for a deal that would protect the status quo in the Middle East in return for Israel's giving up some of the territories occupied during the 1967 war. He has been more than willing to help suppress the struggle of the Palestinian Arabs to reclaim their homeland in order to make such a deal.

In his speech to the World Peace Congress in Moscow on October 26 Brezhnev again stressed his commitment to "normalization" of the imperialist status quo, with "secure borders" for the colonial-settler state of Israel.

But the imperialists, while willing to make deals with Moscow to help suppress revolutionary movements, are not willing to limit their sphere of influence. They represent a capitalist system, a system that must expand to survive. The result is constant attempts to enlarge their field of activity and to push back the struggles of the colonial masses for political and economic independence.

This dynamic was shown five days after the outbreak of the Middle East war, when House-Senate conferees restored most of the money that had been cut from the Pentagon budget in previous congressional action. Similarly, whether or not Nixon knew of Israel's planned Suez offensive in advance, once it materialized he had no compunctions about trying to improve the position of the U. S. client state, even at the risk of nuclear war.

As for the Soviet bureaucrats, although they were willing to stand by and watch Nixon terror bomb the Vietnamese, and even talk about generations of peace while he was doing it, they took a different view when the capitalist regime in Egypt was threatened with a decisive defeat.

The Middle East lies just south of the Soviet Union, and the Kremlin has no desire to see its southern flank under exclusive U. S. domination. The bureaucratic caste in Moscow is motivated by the most narrow and immediate considerations of national interest. It saw those interests threatened in the Middle East, but not in Vietnam.

The Kremlin policy of seeking an accommodation with the U. S. by making concessions to it is doomed to failure because of the predatory nature of imperialism. In addition, this policy *increases* the possibility of nuclear confrontation, because the bureaucrats refuse to take a firm stand except when they see their vital interests threatened. The result is that when they finally act, they often find themselves in a corner from which they cannot retreat.

Nixon a madman?

Nixon's readiness to wipe out human civilization is such a palpable sign of insanity that some are tempted to blame the nuclear threat on his particular mental condition. Unfortunately, Nixon's madness is wholly in keeping with the system he represents. He had the support of the entire ruling class in his action.

On October 27 the *New York Times* editors said, "The con-

frontation through which the two superpowers have just moved still has its hazy aspects; but whatever the element of danger that existed these past two days, an outcome of genuine peace talks in the Middle East could go far toward justifying the risks that were taken."

Thus, the *Times* supports the threat of blowing up the world as a tool of U. S. foreign policy—a position it also took when Kennedy used the same threat during the Cuban missile crisis.

Another aspect of imperialism revealed by the latest Middle East crisis was the sharpening competition between the major capitalist powers. White House spokesman Robert McCloskey, Secretary of Defense James Schlesinger, Kissinger, and Nixon all berated their European allies for their attitude during the crisis. Kissinger complained that he was "disgusted" with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, and Nixon agreed that "our European friends haven't been as cooperative as they might've been in attempting to help us work out the Middle East settlement."

They were complaining about the fact that all the NATO countries, with the exception of Portugal, refused permission to the U. S. to use bases on their territories for resupply of Israel. West Germany, which had been allowing the U. S. to use its territory to supply military material to Israel, publicly demanded that this stop—it had been done too blatantly.

The European capitalist countries, which depend on the Middle East for about 75 percent of their oil, have no fundamental difference with the policy of maintaining Israel as an imperialist beachhead in the area against the Arab revolution. But at the same time, in their diplomatic posture, they wanted to appear to take their distance from Washington in the latest conflict. Europe's interests are "rather different from the interests of the United States," said Lord Carrington, the British minister of defense.

Nixon disagreed, in his usual arrogant way. He said that "Europe, which gets 80 percent of its oil from the Mideast, would have frozen to death this winter unless there'd been a settlement."

The public rift in the NATO alliance was unprecedented, reflecting the growing power and independence of the European capitalists vis-a-vis Wall Street. At the same time, American predominance was reaffirmed when Nixon took the world to the brink of nuclear war without even consulting his NATO allies.

Seeds of a new war

At his October 26 news conference Nixon asserted that "the outlook for a permanent peace is the best that it has been in 20 years." But even without the growing ambitions of Washington's partners in NATO, the prospect in the Middle East is not for peace and stability. Israel has made no secret of its dismay over U. S. pressure for even the most minimal concessions, and there is little possibility that the Arab states will regain all or even most of the land that was taken from them in 1967.

Added to these factors is the denial of the rights of the Palestinians by the U. S.-Soviet deal to recognize Israel as a permanent fixture in the Middle East. The Zionist state, which acts as an imperialist spearhead in the Arab world, will continue its policies of aggression and expansion, and the Palestinians will continue to fight for their rights until they win.

There will be new crises in the Middle East as long as imperialism exists. Until the socialist revolution in the U. S. disarms the Nixons and the Kissingers, the entire human race will be threatened with extinction again and again. Nixon's promises of "permanent peace" notwithstanding, that is the real lesson of the events of the last week.

Anti-Arab Campaign Must Be Answered

Editorial From The Militant

The experience of the Vietnam war has led many people here in the U. S. to view with healthy suspicion the idea of a new military adventure. Capitalist politicians, Zionist propagandists, and the mass media are working zealously to overcome this reluctance. Their method fits the cause they are defending. It is a campaign of racist slander and vilification directed against the Arab peoples.

The anti-Arab racism the Zionist regime breeds is the conquerors' contempt for their victims—a contempt that is used to justify oppression. A Harris poll published by *Time* magazine in 1971 found that half of Israeli Jews thought "Arabs are lazier than Israelis." Three out of four believed Arabs "less intelligent" and "more cruel." Two out of three thought Arabs "inferior" and "more dishonest." And 80 percent thought "Arabs are not so brave as Israelis."

The same racist chauvinism infects supporters of Israel in
From *The Militant*, October 26, 1973

the U. S. A major chant at a pro-Israel rally of 30,000 held October 14, 1973, in New York City was "Arab Blood Must Flow!"

Jacob Stein, a major Zionist leader, recently fumed that "the civilized nations of the world" had helped in "fostering a climate of opinion in Arab minds that leads them to believe they can proceed with impunity against Israel." In Stein's view the Arabs are not civilized people—they are barbarians.

The Israeli oppressors and their imperialist backers, as is usual in such cases, believe their own propaganda. "Gentlemen," Israeli Chief of Staff David Elazar told newsmen on October 8, "we have begun the destruction of the Egyptian army." Two days later *New York Times* military analyst Drew Middleton complained "something went wrong."

News reports persisted in discussing "the myth that Arabs can't fight." That they could have taken such a myth seriously is a small indication of the imperial arrogance of the U. S. rulers. But the difficulties of its client state in the Middle East have made the propagation of such racist poison more important than ever for the U. S.

A recent television newscast was typical in this regard. It showed Israeli troops dancing a hora, followed by Israeli wounded at a field hospital. Finally, it turned to a Syrian hospital—where wounded Israeli prisoners were shown! Israeli wounded were portrayed as human beings—Arab casualties were converted into statistics.

Involved here is conscious preparation for U. S. intervention in the fighting. This racist campaign aimed at the Arab peoples must be answered! And there are clear indications that such an effort would be able to reach masses of Americans.

Not only is the attention of millions focused on the Middle East, but the latest Gallup poll shows that most Americans do not identify with Israel in this war. Rallies, teach-ins, and information campaigns exposing the role of Israel in the Middle East have occurred on campuses and in communities across the country. They serve as an example of what has to be done on a larger scale in the coming weeks.

FURTHER READING

On this and related subjects, from Pathfinder Press:

- Israel: A Colonial-Settler State?**
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